



NEWSLETTER JUNE 2017

DATABASE: 7239 WHANAU CARERS

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri, Greetings to all!

## Raised by his Wonderful Grandma

We first met Jean and Zac at our North Shore GRG meeting when Zac was only 3. Jean has religiously kept every newsletter we have produced and still loves to get them now.



**Sister Act Auckland: Musical Director: Zac Johns. Age 23.**

Zac is an Auckland based Music Director, conductor, composer and pianist who holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Auckland. Last year he was the conductor for the Auckland season of Evita and also played in the pit of The Civic theatre season of The Phantom of The Opera. Recent shows Zac has worked on include: the New Zealand premiere seasons of Dogfight and In The Heights, 2014 Civic Theatre Season of Mamma Mia, Godspell, and Bugsy Malone.

Zac's compositions have been workshopped/performed by the New Zealand Symphony



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Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, and NZTrio, as well as performed and awarded in the Short + Sweet Theatre Festival.

## Facebook

Did you know we have a GRG face book page? You can message us direct without anyone else seeing this. You can also leave a visitor post. This page has recipes, laughs, practical information, a weekly Sunday song, relevant articles to our role and much more. You can access it via our website by clicking on the face book blue icon or paste to your browser: <https://www.facebook.com/grg.org.nz/>

## Grandparents are Unrecognised Victims of the P Crisis – We Need to Support Them

by [The Listener](#) / 25 May, 2017



To say we have a P epidemic seriously understates our methamphetamine situation. It's the ultimate time bomb, with an ability to reach backwards as well as forwards in ruining the lives of three generations at once.

That's because those addicted to this pernicious drug very often have children, who very often fall into the care of their grandparents – ready or not.

Methamphetamine is not the only cause of this social dislocation, but it's been the fastest-growing and most acutely disruptive one.

This has largely been a hidden problem, as grandparents have tended to struggle on in silence out of love and duty. Finally, thanks in large measure to campaigning senior carer Diane Vivian QSO, officials are recognising the need for help. That 17,000 children and nearly 10,000 grandparents are affected at any given time shows there's chronic social dislocation.

It's now the norm, rather than a begrudged dispensation by Work and Income, that grandparent carers receive the Unsupported Child's Benefit for each child and associated lump-sum grants for schooling, bedding and the like. But the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust, which Vivian founded, says many grandparents are still arbitrarily denied any assistance by ignorant or obstructive local Winz officials. And what should surely be a vital accompanying free social support, that of counselling for the children – and possibly the grandparents – is rarely provided at all.

By definition, this is practically always an emergency situation, and generally the children have already suffered some trauma by the time the grandparents

take them in. If it's not P addiction, it's alcohol, crime or severe ill health that has rendered a parent or parents incapable of raising their children.

Such children are surely the very definition of vulnerable and should automatically trigger a Family Group Conference process to tailor counselling and health and developmental checks. This hardly ever happens, yet of those caregivers surveyed in a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren's study survey released last year, 41% said their grandchildren had exhibited attachment disorder, violent behaviour or other serious emotional problems.

On compassionate grounds alone, wraparound services for such children should be automatic. On financial cost grounds, it's a no-brainer. Untreated trauma sets children up for grim, impoverished futures. There's also the toll on grandparents. Statistically likely to suffer poor health and be on modest fixed incomes, many are ill-equipped to take on troubled children. Yet for years they've been treated appallingly, the welfare system all but deaf to their needs.

Now 70% are receiving the Unsupported Child's Benefit, but it's a lingering iniquity that WINZ first requires proof that the parent-child relationship has broken down irretrievably and that the grandparents will have to care for the children for at least a year. Both can be hard to document, especially if the family has not already come to the notice of social workers or agencies. The state's response should surely be to support the grandparent carers for as long as they have custody.

As for methamphetamine addiction, enlightenment may be dawning in some official circles, if not all. From mid-year, police in Northland will prioritise treatment over arrest and prosecution – in partnership with health officials, who are gearing up treatment services accordingly. Together they have put \$3 million into extra police numbers and addiction facilities.

Police are unequivocal that P addiction is central to the district's out-of-kilter crime rate. Health services see the effects, too, in violent and irrational patients. They've decided punishment for possessing and pushing the drug needs to take second place to getting those addicted off it.

The idyll of eradicating P supply has proved an illusion. With the drug selling for \$700,000 and

more a kilogram, it's been worthwhile for rival gangs to team up to retrieve seagoing floating bags dispatched from China complete with navigational apparatus. The bonanza is now ironically rebounding, with gang leaders recently asking the Government for help in getting addiction treatment for their members. This request was bounced tartly by Police Minister Paula Bennett, who said she'd consider it once the

gangs stopped making money from P.

But Far North police area commander Riki Whiu says his staff are enthusiastic about any community-led initiative to get people off the drug, adding, "We can't afford to take our foot off this ngangara [demon]."

This article was first published in the June 3, 2017 issue of the New Zealand Listener.

## Caregiver Training Opportunities

### Triple P

Check out the Triple P [group courses and sessions currently scheduled](#) by the Triple P Centre or call us on [09 579 1794](tel:095791794) to book a private session or course. You can choose from:

- programmes for [parents of children from birth – 12](#)
- programmes for [parents of teenagers](#)
- programmes for parents of [children with a disability](#)

and [more](#) [www.triplep-parenting.net.nz](http://www.triplep-parenting.net.nz)

### Fostering Kids

Fostering Kids New Zealand provides various learning opportunities to help you in your role of caring for vulnerable children. The training is designed to empower and equip you with the knowledge you need to help support and enrich the lives of the children in your care. This includes the delivery of over 150 courses a year through the [National Caregiver Training Programme](#) (NCTP), [First Aid Courses](#), specialist courses, NZQA opportunities and more. If you would like to find out more about these workshops or register please click here for the [training calendar](#).

Any questions or for any assistance registering please contact: [caregivertraining@fosteringkids.org.nz](mailto:caregivertraining@fosteringkids.org.nz) or 0800 100 849

### The Parenting Place

Toolbox is free for caregivers. Thanks to government funding we can provide Toolbox free of charge to all [grandparents raising grandchildren](#), foster carers, [whānau caregivers](#), home for life parents and adopters.

#### Toolbox contacts

Please see [here](#) for a list of national coordinators and their contact details.  
[www.theparentingplace.com](http://www.theparentingplace.com)

### Parent to Parent

Phone: 0508 236 236 [www.parent2parent.org.nz](http://www.parent2parent.org.nz)

Often raising a child with a disability is an experience that isn't planned, and we know it can be a challenging journey. Parent to Parent can inform, educate, inspire and support you as you navigate your way through your family's experience with disability. Their services are free and confidential.

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## Free Respite Camps | KidzaCool

These 5-day programmes are held during July, January and April school holidays. For more information on how to apply, please make contact by telephone or see their website:

<http://standforchildren.org.nz/kidzacoool-adventures>

Northern Region	Phone 09 437 9050	10-14 July
Auckland Region	Phone 09 534 4017	17-21 July
Midland Region	Phone 07 345 9097	10-14 July
East Coast Region	Phone 06 867 5614	10-14 July
Central Region	Phone 06 364 8069	10-14 July
Christchurch Region	Phone 03 332 2541	17-21 July
Southern Region	Phone 03 446 8119	10-14 July

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## Support Group Check-in

### New Groups

We are delighted to let you know we have several new official Support Groups happening.

**Gisborne:** Venus Hongara on 06 867 5629 [venushongara@gmail.com](mailto:venushongara@gmail.com)

**Tokoroa:** Pam Anscombe on 07 886 0558 [sandpanscombe@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sandpanscombe@xtra.co.nz)

**Taupo:** Lesley-Anne Wells on 07 3773539 [lesley-anne@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lesley-anne@xtra.co.nz)

We give thanks to these lovely people and indeed to all our volunteer Support Group Coordinators (full list on back page).

### Napier

Yesterday I had the privilege of meeting Gabby from 'Out and about with kids in Hawkes Bay', says our GRG Co Rozane. She runs a jammies for June drive in the Hawkes Bay and kindly donated a supply to GRG and a number of new baby clothes knitted clothing, hats galore, blankets and some pre loved items as well. What a load I had in my van. I have been busy sorting for members (stock limited in some sizes) matching what I have with members who have a need.... I will also have some starter packs made up ready for new members who may not have much at the time of joining..... **To say this is very much appreciated is an understatement....** I have had the privilege of contacting a number of members tonight, who have a need for these jammies. **They have asked that their amazement, gratitude and appreciation be passed on to the donors and thank you very much OUT and About.**

Rozane can be contacted on 06 843 0054 for information on local support group happenings, and meetings.

### Waiuku Auckland

Luana is holding her first new support group meetings. Being a relatively new group, she will endeavour to get relevant speakers for a short time at these meetings. These meetings are peer-to-peer support meetings where you can get to know others who care full-time for their grandchildren, whanau or kin.

You can contact Luana on 021 070 8465.



## Managing Screen Time Online for Children and Young People

At our recent Support Coordinator and Field Staff training in Wellington, Kathryn Berkett of Engage Training Ltd gave us a very engaging and practical presentation on the latest research on understanding how best to manage and guide “screen time” for children and young people online. This is an issue that affects us all. It can be extremely challenging for adults, let alone children, to put down devices and experience the real world these days when so many adults and children are attached (or even addicted) to their devices!

The key message we learned from her presentation is that to determine what and how much of an affect screen-time has on the brain (at various ages) we need to think about what the brain needs for positive development. We need experiences to learn. Experiences connect cells in the brain. We all need to practice a skill to get better at it. Children can learn certain skills from screen time, but they are not a substitute for real-life experiences. We need to think about what are they missing. Have they learned in the real world to wait until someone has finished talking before they say something? Have they learned to stay calm, be patient, have empathy? Are they learning in the real world how to take real risks, to understand consequences of their actions in the real world? Do they know how to plan something from beginning to end in the real world? If the answer is no, then they probably don't have the balance right between their screen time world and the real world.

Engage Training specialises in working with organisations around the support of those who may have experienced early trauma. Kathryn has a Masters in Educational Psychology and is also a certified Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics practitioner - a qualification she gained via Dr Bruce Perry's Child Trauma Academy

If you get a chance to hear Kathryn speak on this subject it is well worth it to learn some practical and effective strategies. See [www.engagetraining.co.nz](http://www.engagetraining.co.nz) for contact details and more information.

## Jumping at Shadows

We often hear from some carers in absolute panic because the birth parent(s) has made threats to take children back or to challenge them in Court again. This more often than not, is just to cause you stress and rattle your cage. In some cases, it is a manipulative ploy to get you to do what they want. Be it longer visitations, removal of supervised access and sadly in some cases for cash. Please (and we know it is hard), do not rise to the bait. Take a deep breath and wait. Wait until something comes legally in your mail box. So, put up your wings of steel and ignore what they say until you get something in writing from a legal source.



## The Mat



Sometimes this mat sails along just nicely for a relaxed smooth ride, other times it sways from side to side as we overcome little hiccups which visit as we raise little ones and not so little ones. But sometimes this mat swings madly from side to side threatening to dump us off. We all hang on with knuckles white and trust that we will be back to a smooth passage real soon. And it will. Such is the life in caring for others not born of us.

# Grand's reflections...

## My Aroha

At thirteen my granddaughter has returned to her mother with my aroha.

She feels it is her time to give her mum and siblings some of her love and time. I wish her so much love joy, happiness, success and fulfilment of her dreams but I miss her so very much.

My grandson, her brother, came to me at 4 and he will always be with me. His needs are greater.

He has reactive attachment disorder, ADHD and several other needs. I will always fight for him, be there for him, nurture and provide for him. I will always have his back, meet any need he has. I will always love him with every waking breath. I am his nanny, he is my grandson and like all my moko, he is my world.

To all GRG we are blessed, be it sometimes difficult, be it always tiring, we are chosen for them. We are all they have.

Bless you all with Aroha  
Kim

## Angels in our Midst

Watch for angels in your path! Last Thursday, I was in the grocery store with my 5-year-old grand-daughter and my 10 month old great grand-daughter (who is with me/hub in kinship care). An older couple (in their 80's?) approached us and had to talk to the girls and made over how cute they were...then the lady looked at me and said...and GOD BLESS YOU...these girls will be so thankful they had you in their life. Didn't know us...didn't know the situation. Just a random encounter with what I think was an angel with a message when I needed it most.

## Handy Hint

Time to put away those fans: cover cage and rotating blades with a plastic shopping bag, before storage. Saves fiddly cleaning of the dust when needed again next summer.

## Days Gone By

I am missing the days now gone when I was made to play with Barbie dolls with granddaughters, when I had to teach my grandchildren how to roller-skate. No more grandson building blanket forts anymore and the days of playing Ludo have gone right out the window. No one wants to make me read bedtime stories over and over again anymore either. They never seem to want to go to the local park now. Kind of miss those days. Now, as the kids have got older and heading into their teens it's WIFI, tablets, phones, and sniping at each other over just about everything. She's a spoilt brat and he's a dumb idiot and she won't stay out of my room and he's taking too long in the shower when he knows it was my turn first and he won't help with the dishes ... and she is looking at me....etc

They are driving me crazy! I'm really wishing they were sweet little kids again.

But, as kids do, they are growing older and so, alas, am I...

Pauline Sloan





[Anti-bullying](#)



0800 456 450



[www.powertoprotect.net.nz](http://www.powertoprotect.net.nz)



Give a Little to GRG

<https://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/grg>

## Can we help you?

Members ONLY services are available nationwide  
Caregivers Toll free helpline  
0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637)  
For landline caregivers only please.  
New members and general information please dial ext. 1

Members' Support Manager:  
Di Vivian  
Auckland/free callers:  
(09) 480 6530  
Email Di at: [office@grg.org.nz](mailto:office@grg.org.nz)

GRG Trust NZ  
PO Box 34892  
Birkenhead  
Auckland 0746  
  
Suite 4 (Ground floor)  
Rawene Chambers  
17 Rawene Rd  
Birkenhead Auckland 0626

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Chief Executive:  
Kate Bundle 027 2446763  
Email: [kate@grg.org.nz](mailto:kate@grg.org.nz)

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by contacting Kelly at the Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept.  
Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.

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Member Support Manager: Di & Team (as a caregiver you are part of our team)

Heoi ano, na. *E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love.*

*Ka kite Ka Whangaia ka tupu, ka puawai* - That which is nurtured, blossoms and grows

We are respectful, we listen, we learn

*He rōpū manaaki, he rōpū whakarongo, he rōpū ako mātou*

Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

We are a Charitable Trust



Thank you to our Sponsors and Funders supporting GRG's Support Services throughout New Zealand including this newsletter



# SUPPORT GROUP CONTACT NUMBERS

For the most up to date contact details please go to our website [www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz)

If you are a grandparent or whanau caregiver and need a referral to one of our Field Officers please call 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or if you are in Auckland please call 09 480 6530

\* Telephone Support \*\* Telephone Support and Meetings

<b>Auckland: North Shore**</b>	Diane Vivian (temp)	09 480 6530	<a href="mailto:office@grg.org.nz">office@grg.org.nz</a>
<b>Papakura/Pukekohe**</b>	Sharon Warne	027 419 4777	<a href="mailto:warneysvision@hotmail.com">warneysvision@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Waitakere**</b>	Debbie Hall	09 818 7828	<a href="mailto:debron@xtra.co.nz">debron@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Waiuku</b>	Luana Misa	021 070 8465	<a href="mailto:luanapayne@hotmail.co.nz">luanapayne@hotmail.co.nz</a>
<b>South Auckland**</b>	Virginia Peebles	09 277 7514	
<b>East Auckland/ Tamaki**</b>	Tess Gould-Thorpe	09 535 6903	<a href="mailto:theresagouldthorpe@gmail.com">theresagouldthorpe@gmail.com</a>
<b>Canterbury**</b>	Veronica Brunt	03 942 5935	<a href="mailto:r.v.brunt@paradise.net.nz">r.v.brunt@paradise.net.nz</a>
<b>Dannevirke</b>	Malcolm Johnson	06 374 0407	
<b>Dargaville*</b>	Sandy Zimmer	09 439 4420	<a href="mailto:sandy.zimmer@hotmail.com">sandy.zimmer@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Gisborne</b>	Venus Hongara	06 867 5629	<a href="mailto:venushongara@gmail.com">venushongara@gmail.com</a>
<b>Hamilton / Huntly**</b>	Pat Davis	07 855 0530	<a href="mailto:hamilton111.grg@gmail.com">hamilton111.grg@gmail.com</a>
<b>Hastings</b>	Tom Kupa	06 879 4302	<a href="mailto:kupakarate@outlook.com">kupakarate@outlook.com</a>
<b>Invercargill / Gore**</b>	Lynette Nielsen	03 216 0411	<a href="mailto:invercargillgrg@gmail.com">invercargillgrg@gmail.com</a>
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<b>Kaiwaka</b>	Dianah Roberts	022 381 9539	<a href="mailto:mydogmollymycowmoo-moo@gmail.com">mydogmollymycowmoo-moo@gmail.com</a>
<b>Levin* / Palmerston North</b>	Ann Waddell	06 362 7269	<a href="mailto:ann.hen@xtra.co.nz">ann.hen@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Napier**</b>	Rozane Duncan	06 843 0054	<a href="mailto:charleez06@xtra.co.nz">charleez06@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Nelson**</b>	Paula Eggers	035445714 021 062 6583	<a href="mailto:paulaeggers2000@yahoo.com.au">paulaeggers2000@yahoo.com.au</a>
<b>Otago/Dunedin*</b>	Aad & Leonie	03 465 1764	<a href="mailto:omaandopa@xtra.co.nz">omaandopa@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Porirua Wellington**</b>	Lise Maru	0211 219453	<a href="mailto:lise.maru@clear.net.nz">lise.maru@clear.net.nz</a>
<b>Rotorua**</b>	Anne Donnell	020 402 22910	<a href="mailto:rotoruagrg@gmail.com">rotoruagrg@gmail.com</a>
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<b>Taupo</b>	Lesley-Anne Wells	07 377 3539	<a href="mailto:lesley-anne@xtra.co.nz">lesley-anne@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Tauranga</b>	Karen Ormsby	07 579 3571	<a href="mailto:jewelzs@hotmail.com">jewelzs@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Papamoa/Mt Maunganui</b>	Rawinia Macredie	07 562 2850	<a href="mailto:jnmacredie@kinect.co.nz">jnmacredie@kinect.co.nz</a>
<b>Te Kuiti**</b>	Kay Higgins	027 430 2939	<a href="mailto:palmdrive@xtra.co.nz">palmdrive@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Tokoroa</b>	Pam Anscombe	07 886 0558	<a href="mailto:sandpanscombe@xtra.co.nz">sandpanscombe@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Upper Hutt**</b>	Margaret Pearson	04 976 9475	<a href="mailto:maggiemaggpie@paradise.net.nz">maggiemaggpie@paradise.net.nz</a>
<b>Whanganui**</b>	Jenny Morton	06 344 3656 027 443 7780	<a href="mailto:jaydeez@clear.net.nz">jaydeez@clear.net.nz</a>
<b>Wairarapa**</b>	Tere Lenihan	06 379 5407	<a href="mailto:terel@swscc.org.nz">terel@swscc.org.nz</a>
<b>Wellington**</b>	Cecilee Donovan	04 477 0632	<a href="mailto:cecileed@gmail.com">cecileed@gmail.com</a>
<b>Whakatane**</b>	Shirley Faulkner	07 308 8524	<a href="mailto:shirleyfaulkner@xtra.co.nz">shirleyfaulkner@xtra.co.nz</a>
<b>Whangarei**</b>	Lianne Nicholas	09 435 0044	<a href="mailto:grg.whangarei@gmail.com">grg.whangarei@gmail.com</a>